

**Montana WIC Program  
eWIC Working Group Conference Call Notes  
May 19, 2017**

**Montana WIC Contacts:**

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**Important Resource:** Please visit Montana WIC's [eWIC Information for Retailers](http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/WIC/Retailers/eWICInformationForRetailers) webpage for information such as training memos, conference call notes, Approved Product List, and more.

<http://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/WIC/Retailers/eWICInformationForRetailers>

**Project Timeline**

Retailers in the pilot area will go live with eWIC June 8, 2017 and statewide rollout will occur in September 2017. The pilot area includes all retailers in the following counties: Broadwater, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, Meagher, Powell, Silver Bow.

**Training Memos**

Montana WIC has been distributing eWIC training memos to every retailer. These short handouts describe many of the training requirements for retailers. It is important to understand that these are high-level training memos, and retailer managers are responsible for ensuring their staff knows how to conduct eWIC processes in their particular stores. For example, it is required that WIC customers receive all of the same discounts as other customers. The process for applying a discount at the time of sale on your POS is the training responsibility of retailer managers.

**eWIC Certifications**

WIC is required to conduct a final end-to-end test of retailer's POS systems to ensure they are capable of conducting eWIC transactions. During these store visits WIC will be testing different purchase situations, including a balance inquiry, ringing up an authorized and an unauthorized food item, applying a promotion or discount, void procedures, and checking the remaining balance on an ending receipt. We are timing these visits to have POS installers present as well, and have scheduled almost all of them for pilot area retailers. For all other retailers, WIC will be making contact with your store to schedule a certification visit in late August or early September.

**Approved Product List & PLU Mapping**

Please visit the *eWIC Information for Retailers* webpage to view WIC's Approved Product List (APL), which includes PLU for fresh fruits and vegetables. Remember, every PLU your store uses must match a comparable PLU on WIC's list. If they do not match, the PLU your store uses will have to be mapped. WIC requires that PLU be formatted to a 17 digit length.

The PLU list on the webpage indicates both the 4-digit PLU and the 17 digit format it must be mapped to. Some systems can provide this formatting automatically, while some systems will require mapping from a 4-digit format to a 17 digit format. Please contact your POS manager to learn if mapping is necessary for your store, and please contact the WIC Program if you have any questions.

### **Submit UPC to WIC**

You may find that WIC's Approved Product List (APL) does not include an item that may be WIC eligible. We need your help to keep the APL updated, and ask that you send WIC Nutritionists that product information so it can be evaluated for addition to the APL. There are two ways to send this information:

- Use the **UPC Submission Form**, available on the *eWIC Information for Retailers* webpage.
- Use the **WIC Shopper App** on your mobile device, which includes a function to submit UPC information directly from your smartphone.

### **Requirement to Accept both eWIC Cards & Checks**

As we transition to the eWIC card, retailers will need to be able to accept both eWIC cards and checks through November 2017, so please keep your stamps. Most WIC benefits are issued on a 3 month basis, which means some participants in the pilot area could have checks through September, and some participants statewide could have checks through November. All checks will be expired by November, and all new benefits after that time will be issued on the eWIC card.

### **Discussion About the eWIC Transaction**

*Retail staff is no longer required to...*

- Verify benefits apply to the correct date range.
- Compare WIC customer's signatures.
- Ensure WIC foods and non WIC foods are separated at the checkout counter. eWIC allows for *mixed basket transactions*, where all items are rung up in one group and the eWIC card applies payment to only authorized items (mixed basket only available on multi-function POS equipment).

*Retail staff is required to...*

- Always ensure the eWIC card is the first form of payment accepted (so that WIC foods are not applied to another form of payment).
- Provide a benefit balance (sometimes called a Shopping List) to WIC customers if requested before the transaction starts.
- Treat WIC customers the same as every other customer. All discounts and promotions apply to WIC customers as well.
- Verify with the customer the foods that were applied to the eWIC card.
- Always provide a receipt to the WIC customer.

## Question and Answer

**Q. *What types of training will WIC Participants receive for eWIC?***

A. WIC participants will be trained on eWIC procedures during their appointments at the clinics. They will be instructed to manage the PIN for their card very carefully, and to always use the eWIC card as the first form of payment on a WIC transaction. They will also be trained on the WIC authorized food list and the use of the WIC Shopper app.

**Q. *Are WIC customers allowed to use credit/debit/EBT cards during a WIC transaction?***

A. Almost all retailers in Montana have the ability to conduct “mixed basket” transactions, where customers can bring up all food items, and everything is rung up at once. When the customer runs the eWIC card as the first form of payment it will remove those WIC authorized items, and require payment for any remaining balance. That remaining balance can be paid with any form of tender accepted by the retailer.

**Q. *How will WIC Participants know their available food balance when they walk into the store?***

A. Participants can access a printout of their available balance either directly from WIC staff at the time of the appointment or by using a kiosk in the clinic waiting area. They may also call a cardholder service line to hear an automated recording of their balance, or can view their current balance on the WIC Shopper app on their smartphones. However, many participants may still request a balance inquiry from retailers (prints on the receipt) before beginning to shop. Please provide these balance inquiries (sometimes called a Shopping List) if requested by a WIC customer.

**Q. *Is there a limit to how many times a WIC customer can enter their PIN incorrectly?***

A. Yes. WIC customers may only enter an incorrect PIN four times before it is locked and they will have to call cardholder services to have it reset.

**Q. *What if a cashier fully completes a WIC transaction and the customer then wants to reverse it?***

The store and the customer would be unable to reverse the transaction. Once a WIC transaction is finalized those prescribed foods are removed from the participant’s available balance and cannot be put back on. Once a WIC transaction is finalized, it cannot be reversed.

**Q. *Do WIC benefits roll over from month to month?***

A. No. While multiple months of benefits may be loaded onto a eWIC card, each month’s benefits expire on the last day of the month and cannot be redeemed at a later date.

**Next Call: June 23, 2017 10:00am**

**Call in Number: 1-866-910-4857**

**Passcode: 768324**